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**From:** Faeth, Lisa [Faeth.Lisa@epa.gov]  
**Sent:** 2/26/2019 3:03:02 PM  
**To:** Anderson, Steve [Anderson.Steve@epa.gov]; Askinazi, Valerie [Askinazi.Valerie@epa.gov]; Baptist, Erik [Baptist.Erik@epa.gov]; Barkas, Jessica [barkas.jessica@epa.gov]; Beck, Nancy [Beck.Nancy@epa.gov]; Blair, Susanna [Blair.Susanna@epa.gov]; Buster, Pamela [Buster.Pamela@epa.gov]; Canavan, Sheila [Canavan.Sheila@epa.gov]; Caraballo, Mario [Caraballo.Mario@epa.gov]; Carroll, Megan [Carroll.Megan@epa.gov]; Cherepy, Andrea [Cherepy.Andrea@epa.gov]; Christian, Myrta [Christian.Myrta@epa.gov]; Corado, Ana [Corado.Ana@epa.gov]; Davies, Clive [Davies.Clive@epa.gov]; Dekleva, Lynn [dekleva.lynn@epa.gov]; Devito, Steve [Devito.Steve@epa.gov]; Doa, Maria [Doa.Maria@epa.gov]; Drewes, Scott [Drewes.Scott@epa.gov]; Dunn, Alexandra [dunn.alexandra@epa.gov]; Dunton, Cheryl [Dunton.Cheryl@epa.gov]; Edelstein, Rebecca [Edelstein.Rebecca@epa.gov]; Edmonds, Marc [Edmonds.Marc@epa.gov]; Elwood, Holly [Elwood.Holly@epa.gov]; Faeth, Lisa [Faeth.Lisa@epa.gov]; Farquharson, Chenise [Farquharson.Chenise@epa.gov]; Fehrenbacher, Cathy [Fehrenbacher.Cathy@epa.gov]; Feustel, Ingrid [feustel.ingrid@epa.gov]; Frank, Donald [Frank.Donald@epa.gov]; Gibson, Hugh [Gibson.Hugh@epa.gov]; Gimlin, Peter [Gimlin.Peter@epa.gov]; Gorder, Chris [Gorder.Chris@epa.gov]; Gordon, Brittney [Gordon.Brittney@epa.gov]; Grant, Brian [Grant.Brian@epa.gov]; Gray, Shawna [Gray.Shawna@epa.gov]; Groeneveld, Thomas [Groeneveld.Thomas@epa.gov]; Guthrie, Christina [Guthrie.Christina@epa.gov]; Hanley, Mary [Hanley.Mary@epa.gov]; Helfgott, Daniel [Helfgott.Daniel@epa.gov]; Henry, Tala [Henry.Tala@epa.gov]; Kapust, Edna [Kapust.Edna@epa.gov]; Kemme, Sara [kemme.sara@epa.gov]; Koch, Erin [Koch.Erin@epa.gov]; Krasnic, Toni [krasnic.toni@epa.gov]; Lavoie, Emma [Lavoie.Emma@epa.gov]; Lee, Mari [Lee.Mari@epa.gov]; Lee, Virginia [Lee.Virginia@epa.gov]; Leopard, Matthew (OEI) [Leopard.Matthew@epa.gov]; Liva, Aakruti [Liva.Aakruti@epa.gov]; Lobar, Bryan [Lobar.Bryan@epa.gov]; Mclean, Kevin [Mclean.Kevin@epa.gov]; Menasche, Claudia [Menasche.Claudia@epa.gov]; Morris, Jeff [Morris.Jeff@epa.gov]; Moss, Kenneth [Moss.Kenneth@epa.gov]; Mottley, Tanya [Mottley.Tanya@epa.gov]; Moyer, Adam [moyer.adam@epa.gov]; Myers, Irina [Myers.Irina@epa.gov]; Myrick, Pamela [Myrick.Pamela@epa.gov]; Nazef, Laura [Nazef.Laura@epa.gov]; Ortiz, Julia [Ortiz.Julia@epa.gov]; Owen, Elise [Owen.Elise@epa.gov]; Parsons, Doug [Parsons.Douglas@epa.gov]; Passe, Loraine [Passe.Loraine@epa.gov]; Pierce, Alison [Pierce.Alison@epa.gov]; Pratt, Johnk [Pratt.Johnk@epa.gov]; Price, Michelle [Price.Michelle@epa.gov]; Reese, Recie [Reese.Recie@epa.gov]; Reisman, Larry [Reisman.Larry@epa.gov]; Rice, Cody [Rice.Cody@epa.gov]; Richardson, Vickie [Richardson.Vickie@epa.gov]; Ross, Philip [Ross.Philip@epa.gov]; Sadowsky, Don [Sadowsky.Don@epa.gov]; Santacroce, Jeffrey [Santacroce.Jeffrey@epa.gov]; Saxton, Dion [Saxton.Dion@epa.gov]; Scarano, Louis [Scarano.Louis@epa.gov]; Scheifele, Hans [Scheifele.Hans@epa.gov]; Schmit, Ryan [schmit.ryan@epa.gov]; Schweer, Greg [Schweer.Greg@epa.gov]; Scott Selken [spselken@up.com]; Scott, Elizabeth [Scott.Elizabeth@epa.gov]; Selby-Mohamadu, Yvette [Selby-Mohamadu.Yvette@epa.gov]; Seltzer, Mark [Seltzer.Mark@epa.gov]; Sheehan, Eileen [Sheehan.Eileen@epa.gov]; Sherlock, Scott [Sherlock.Scott@epa.gov]; Simons, Andrew [Simons.Andrew@epa.gov]; Sirmons, Chandler [Sirmons.Chandler@epa.gov]; Slotnick, Sue [Slotnick.Sue@epa.gov]; Smith, David G. [Smith.DavidG@epa.gov]; Smith-Seam, Rhoda [smith-seam.rhoda@epa.gov]; Stedeford, Todd [Stedeford.Todd@epa.gov]; Strauss, Linda [Strauss.Linda@epa.gov]; Symmes, Brian [Symmes.Brian@epa.gov]; Tanner, Barbara [Tanner.Barbara@epa.gov]; Thompson, Tony [Thompson.Tony@epa.gov]; Tierney, Meghan [Tierney.Meghan@epa.gov]; Tillman, Thomas [Tillman.Thomas@epa.gov]; Tomassoni, Guy [Tomassoni.Guy@epa.gov]; Tran, Chi [Tran.Chi@epa.gov]; Turk, David [Turk.David@epa.gov]; Vendinello, Lynn [Vendinello.Lynn@epa.gov]; Wallace, Ryan [Wallace.Ryan@epa.gov]; Wheeler, Cindy [Wheeler.Cindy@epa.gov]; Widawsky, David [Widawsky.David@epa.gov]; Williams, Aresia [Williams.Aresia@epa.gov]; Williams, Bridget [Williams.Bridget@epa.gov]; Williamson, Tracy [Williamson.Tracy@epa.gov]; Wills, Jennifer [Wills.Jennifer@epa.gov]; Wise, Louise [Wise.Louise@epa.gov]; Wolf, Joel [Wolf.Joel@epa.gov]; Wright, Tracy [Wright.Tracy@epa.gov]; Yowell, John [yowell.john@epa.gov]  
**Subject:** News Articles (For EPA Distribution Only)

**BNA DAILY ENVIRONMENT REPORT ARTICLES**

**Democrats Turn Up Heat on EPA**

Posted Feb. 26, 2019, 7:40 AM

By [Chuck McCutcheon](#)

The EPA is about to feel some serious heat from Democrats.

The new majority party in the House is gearing up for robust oversight of the agency, and its hardest task might be choosing where to focus.

Critics of the Trump administration say the EPA has created an environment ripe for congressional scrutiny. That includes allegations fossil fuel firms, chemical makers, and other companies have too much of a role in crafting the regulations that will govern them, as well as potential conflicts of interest of EPA political officials who came from industry law and lobbying firms.

“There’s not enough hours in the day for them to do the level of oversight they need to do,” says John Bowman, senior director of federal affairs for the Natural Resources Defense Council.

Several House committees are holding hearings today that involve the EPA in some form:

- Energy and Commerce’s oversight and investigations panel scrutinizes the agency’s enforcement program, whose enforcement actions have dipped under Trump.
- An Appropriations panel on commerce, justice, and science looks at the changing climate system and role of climate research. Democrats say the EPA has ignored or downplayed recent alarming climate findings.
- Natural Resources’ oversight panel explores various industries’ tactics on health and environmental risks.

All of the activity comes as the Senate [nears a vote](#) on confirming Andrew Wheeler as the agency’s permanent chief.

To contact the reporter on this story: Chuck McCutcheon in Washington at [cmccutcheon@bloombergenvironment.com](mailto:cmccutcheon@bloombergenvironment.com)

To contact the editors responsible for this story: Gregory Henderson at [ghenderson@bloombergenvironment.com](mailto:ghenderson@bloombergenvironment.com); Susan Bruninga at [sbruninga@bloombergenvironment.com](mailto:sbruninga@bloombergenvironment.com); Rob Tricchinelli at [rtricchinelli@bloombergenvironment.com](mailto:rtricchinelli@bloombergenvironment.com)

## Overhaul of EPA Lead Rules Delayed for Eighth Time

By David Schultz

Posted Feb. 25, 2019, 3:13 PM

The EPA won’t introduce an overhaul of its regulations on lead in drinking water this month, acting agency chief Andrew Wheeler said, the eighth time it has missed a self-imposed deadline on this issue since 2011.

## Phthalate Limits In Packaging Need No Revising, EU Panel Says

By Stephen Gardner

Posted Feb. 25, 2019, 2:50 PM

Europe’s food safety regulator said it’s unclear to what extent chemicals used to help make plastics flexible migrate into food from wrapping and packaging—but the substances are highly unlikely to present a risk whatever the levels are.

## INSIDEEPA.COM ARTICLES

### New EPA Toxics Chief Seeks To Quell Critics As Agency Implements TSCA

In her first public remarks since being sworn in as EPA's toxics chief, Alexandra Dunn sought to respond to both industry and environmentalist critics of the Trump administration's implementation of the revised toxics law, saying her primary goal in implementing the law is "increasing public confidence in the work that we do."

### As EPA Weighs Changes, EDF Says New Chemical Approvals Fail Workers

Environmentalists are charging that the Trump administration's process for approving new chemicals under the recently revised toxics law without restrictions fails to adequately address risks to workers, building on long-standing opposition to the new chemicals review process as Acting EPA Administrator Andrew Wheeler has pledged revisions.

### Endangered Deference Doctrine Could End EPA's Streak Of Court Losses

EPA could soon end its losing streak in litigation over rollbacks of Obama-era policies as lawsuits shift from procedural challenges to fights over the merits of rules on which courts often defer to the agency, but that outcome faces a growing threat from conservative federal judges who are looking to narrow or even scrap such deference.

### EPA Cites Chemours' PFAS Plants For Potential TSCA Violations

EPA has cited chemical company Chemours for violating the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) at two of its plants that manufacture per- and polyfluoroalkyl (PFAS), a sign that environmentalists say may indicate stepped-up EPA enforcement over the issue though they say it also raises concerns about the accuracy of EPA's PFAS data.

### Labor lawsuit seeks ban on methylene chloride paint strippers

Labor advocates are joining the legal push to compel EPA to finalize an Obama-era ban on methylene chloride paint strippers after the Trump administration signaled a weakening of the rule's worker protections.

### California Eyes Green Chemistry Priority For Nail Salon Toluene Products

California's toxics department is proposing that nail salon products containing toluene as the newest priority product under its Safer Consumer Products (SCP) green chemistry program, aiming to spur manufacturers to develop less-toxic alternative compounds to protect salon workers and customers.

### Coatings Makers Fear Use Limits From California Low-VOC Solvent Plan

Manufacturers of paints and other architectural coatings fear a California health hazard office proposal to list the paint solvent parachlorobenzotrifluoride (PCBTF) as a carcinogen under Proposition 65 could spur local restrictions or bans on the PCBTF, which is currently considered a "green" product ingredient that emits low volatile organic compound (VOCs).

### ATSDR selects sites for PFAS exposure studies

The studies "will serve as a foundation for future studies evaluating the impact of PFAS exposure on human health," ATSDR says.

### Environmentalists sue to compel EPA asbestos reporting rule

Public health groups are urging a federal court to compel EPA to strengthen asbestos reporting rule, saying inadequate data will hinder the agency's future review of the substance.

#### EPA updates TSCA inventory to inform upcoming risk reviews

EPA's first major update in decades of the TSCA inventory shows less than half of all listed chemicals as "active," signaling a smaller universe of substances that could be subject to the law's requirements.

#### Plaintiffs Weigh Appeal After Court Rejects EPA Science Advisor Policy Suit

Environmentalists and other plaintiffs are considering asking the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit to review the Trump EPA's policy barring any recipient of an EPA grant from serving on one of its many scientific advisory committees after a federal district court dismissed their suit.

#### White House Plans To Seek 5 Percent Cut To EPA's Fiscal Year 2020 Budget

A top White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB) official says the Trump administration will seek a 5 percent cut to EPA's overall budget and other non-defense discretionary spending in its upcoming fiscal year 2020 appropriations request, teeing up a fight with Congressional leaders who have balked at past attempts to cut those funds.

### **GREENWIRE ARTICLES**

#### **Dems seek ethics probe into New Source Review rollback**

Sean Reilly, E&E News reporter

Published: Monday, February 25, 2019



Bill Wehrum, EPA's assistant administrator for the Office of Air and Radiation, appeared last month in a panel discussion in Washington, D.C. Environmental Change and Security Program/Flickr

Three Democratic lawmakers have asked EPA's in-house watchdog to open an investigation into air chief Bill Wehrum and senior counsel David Harlow, alleging that the two men crossed an ethical line on behalf of a client of their former law firm.

"We are troubled that it appears that Mr. Wehrum and Mr. Harlow may have violated the law and associated regulations" through their involvement in the issuance of a December 2017 memo that relaxed oversight of EPA's New Source Review permitting program, Sen. Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.) and two other lawmakers said in a [letter](#) to acting EPA Inspector General Charles Sheehan.

<https://www.eenews.net/greenwire/2019/02/25/stories/1060122347>

## CHEMICAL WATCH ARTICLES

### Cases of suspected e-cigarette poisoning rise in Sweden

26 February 2019 / Accidents, emergency response & poison centres, Substances of concern, Sweden

The Swedish Poison Information Centre has reported an increase in cases concerning people seeking help for suspected poisoning from e-cigarettes.

The Swedish Chemicals Agency – Kemi – said some incidents involved children drinking the liquid which contains nicotine, an acute toxic substance.

The number of poisoning incidents has "risen sharply" since 2011, with recently published statistics showing the centre was contacted for 67 cases related to e-cigarettes or e-liquids during 2018.

A small amount of 'e-liquid' can cause "serious symptoms", Emma Petersson, pharmacist at the Poison Information Centre, said.

Young children could experience vomiting, lethargy and palpitations. In severe cases, it can lead to seizures and breathing and circulation difficulties, she added. A high concentration of nicotine could be fatal.

Inger Cederberg, Kemi investigator, advised users to take care not to splash the skin or eyes with the fluid and to check the tightness of the cap so children cannot have access.

At the end of last year, in the EU several trade bodies [urged](#) the European Commission to postpone the deadline for harmonised information relating to emergency health response (poison centres).

In their letter, dated 29 November, they cite "a clear lack of preparedness or legal certainty in several key areas".

CLP Annex VIII requires companies placing hazardous mixtures on the EU market to provide member state authorities with certain information about them. The first deadline of 1 January 2020 is for substances placed on the market specifically for consumer use.

### Related Articles

- [Industry pushes Commission to extend CLP poison centre deadline](#)

**Further Information:**

- [Press release \(in Swedish\)](#)
- [National poison information centre \(in Swedish\)](#)

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